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DEPT FOR NEA/ARP

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PINR](#) [PTER](#) [SHUM](#) [MU](#)
SUBJECT: OMANI GOVERNMENT CONDEMNS BHUTTO ASSASSINATION

11. (U) On December 27, Oman's Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued a public statement condemning the assassination of Benazir Bhutto. Characterizing the act as "brutal" and "criminal," the government expressed its "deep sympathy and condolences" to Bhutto's family and the Pakistani people. The Ministry called on Pakistan's leaders to put their differences aside in efforts to achieve "security, stability, and development for the brotherly Pakistani nation." Separately, the Sultan sent a condolence message to Pervez Musharraf, expressing his sympathy to the president, the Pakistani people, and Bhutto's family.

12. (U) The reporting of Bhutto's assassination in the Omani press has been extensive and generally drawn from media outlets such as Reuters and AFP. No editorial content has appeared on the assassination to date. Approximately 50 posts have been recorded on al-Sablah, Oman's Arabic internet chat site, with most responses praising Bhutto and accusing the Pakistani government of being complicit in the assassination. English-language fora have all contained discussion of the event, generally condemning it and the subsequent violence.
GRAPPO